

Father John Baptist Troxler

June 22nd is the anniversary of the death of Father John Baptist Troxler. Joseph Troxler was born on December 24, 1834, in Hohenrain, Canton Luzern, Switzerland. He entered the abbey of Engelberg where he professed his vows as a monk of that monastery on November 17, 1860, receiving the name John Baptist. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Karl Greith of the diocese of St. Gall on June 28, 1863.

On March 10, 1888, the abbot of Engelberg assigned Father John Baptist to Conception Abbey in Missouri.

In 1889, he was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Verona, Missouri, a position he held until 1897. His special interest during his eight year pastorate was the education of children. Father John Baptist built the first parochial school at Sacred Heart Parish and provided the means to have the school operating nine months of the year. Under his leadership, Sisters from St. Scholastica Convent in Shoal Creek, (later, Fort Smith), Arkansas, came to teach in the parochial school in Verona, Missouri.

Father John Baptist Troxler traveled to North Texas at the close of the 19th century, arriving in Lindsay, Texas, on January 22, 1899. He was never actually a member of our community, but with his work in north Texas and his appointment by Bishop Dunne as pastor at Lindsay on September 1, 1899, this parish definitively came under the care of the monks of our monastery because Father John Baptist had associated himself with our pioneer monks in Texas.

In 1899, the Lindsay parishioners welcomed the newly assigned Benedictine pastor, Father John Baptist Troxler. Following a fire in the Lindsay church in early 1899, and the fact that the structure was too small for parish needs, Father John Baptist urged the proposition for building a new church.

After four years of dedicated but strenuous work on the part of the pastor, the newly completed St. Peter's Church was blessed on June 28, 1903, by Bishop Edward J. Dunne of the diocese of Dallas. Because this date also marked the 40th anniversary of Father John Baptist's ordination to the priesthood, Bishop Dunne requested that the pastor be the celebrant of the Mass on the altar which Father John Baptist himself had donated to the parish with the permission of his abbot.

On this happy occasion no one could envision that exactly 14 years after its completion, this beautiful church would be destroyed by a ferocious tornado on May 13, 1917.

Because Father John Baptist's health was failing, Abbot Ignatius sent a monk from Subiaco to be his assistant pastor. With his condition diagnosed as terminal cancer, Father John Baptist spent most of his time at the Muenster priory under the care of Father Bonaventure Binzegger, prior and pastor, who charitably nursed the terminally ill priest.

When Father Bonaventure was appointed pastor of St. Peter's Church, Lindsay, Texas, in May 1904, Father John Baptist returned with him and Father Bonaventure continued charitably nursing his confrere at the rectory.

Father John Baptist died at the rectory in Lindsay, Texas, on June 22, 1904, with Father Bonaventure and two parishioners at his bedside. At the time of his death, he was 69 years old and in the 43rd year of his monastic profession, the 40th of his priesthood. He is buried inside the vestibule of St. Peter's Church in Lindsay, Texas.

